



St. Matthew, Islington

VESTRY REPORT 2024



Clergy

The Rev. Philip Stonhouse, Incumbent

The Rev. Canon Dr. Merv Mercer, Honorary Assistant

Churchwardens

Rector's Churchwarden

Sharon Shao

People's Churchwarden

Karen Lee

Deputy Rector's Churchwarden

Paul Lorimer

Deputy People's Churchwarden

Richard Farrar

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77th Annual Vestry Meeting Agenda

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer
2. Appointment of the Vestry Clerk
3. Appointment of Parish Tribunal / Scrutineers
4. Adoption of Agenda
5. Acceptance of the Minutes of the 76th Annual Vestry Meeting
6. The College of Bishops Pastoral Letter
7. Rector's Report
8. The Wardens' Report
9. Social Justice Vestry Motion
10. Financial Statements and Accountant's Report
11. Presentation of 2025 Parish Budget
12. Review Engagement Motion
13. Appointment of Accounting Firm
14. Rector's Appointments
15. Nominating Committee Report & Parish Elections
 - People's Warden
 - Deputy People's Warden
 - Lay Delegates to Synod
 - Alternate Lay Delegate to Synod
 - Stewardship
 - Envelope Secretary
 - Assistant Envelope Secretary
 - Nominating Committee Chair
 - Scrutineers / Parish Tribunal
16. Baptisms, Weddings & Deaths
17. New Business
18. Prayers of Thanksgiving
19. Adjournment
20. Dismissal

The College of Bishops Pastoral Letter to Vestries, 2025



To the clergy, churchwardens, and parishioners of the Diocese of Toronto:

Beloved Siblings in Christ,

"...be renewed in the spirit ..." – Ephesians 4:23

In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, the Diocese of Toronto is exhibiting a burgeoning health and vitality that inspires us daily. To God be the glory! As your bishops, as we travel around to visit our parishes, we have witnessed the Holy Spirit engaging in marvelous ways with people, groups and ministries right across this Diocese – from Mississauga to Minden, from Cobourg to Collingwood. The Season of Spiritual Renewal, this invitation to spiritual growth, has been enthusiastically received in so many ways, including the sharing of prayer resources, participation in online workshops, and our bishops' Advent study online. We are also looking forward to *#LiveLent: God's Story, Our Story*, a daily Lenten resource with a helpful guide for small group use.

We are excited that the next phase in this Season of Spiritual Renewal is called "Lift Up Our Hearts." Over the coming year, large worship services will take place across the Diocese on five Saturday afternoons at 2 p.m. Each celebration of the Eucharist will feature excellent music, moving testimony, and preachers from within our own Diocese, each with their own unique approach to spiritual renewal. We hope you will plan to join us for one or more of these marvelous gatherings. Come on your own, bring a friend, or hire a bus! We will see you there:

- March 22 – St. James Cathedral (preacher: the Rev. Molly Finlay)
- March 29 – Trinity Church, Streetsville (preacher: the Rev. Canon Stephanie Douglas)
- May 31 – All Saints, Whitby (preacher: the Rev. Gerlyn Henry)
- September 27 – St. James, Orillia (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Rob Hurkmans)
- October 25 – St. Paul's, Bloor Street (preacher: the Rev. Dr. Alvaro Adderley)

The call to spiritual renewal, however, was just the first of 20 Calls articulated in the Cast the Net strategic vision adopted by Synod and this Diocese in 2023. Over the coming year, you will hear us repeatedly emphasising the need for each congregation to review and consider all of the 20 Calls and then choose which two or three your parish will focus on. As you gather today for Vestry, this could be the perfect opportunity to start considering the question. A small group – the Netminders – has prepared resources to help you, which you can find on the [Cast the Net web page](#). While it's important to remember that no congregation could possibly answer all 20 Calls, we strongly believe that each congregation can consider two or three. Leading up to our diocesan Synod in November, we hope that every parish will be able to identify which of the Calls they are living into.

We are pleased to welcome our new Executive Director, Varun Balendra ODT. A familiar face around the Diocese, Varun has served in many volunteer capacities over the years, and we look forward to working together in this new capacity. By the time of our diocesan Synod on Friday, Nov. 7 and Saturday, Nov. 8, we expect that we will be introducing a new Secretary of Synod and a new full-time Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisor, whose primary focus areas will be supporting the work of the Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism (ABAR) and other DEI training, and supporting individuals and parishes to grow, build community, educate and engage.

Some other new faces at Synod may include guests from the Diocese of Brasilia. This past June, at the Cathedral Church of the Resurrection in the city of Brasilia, the two diocesan bishops of Brasilia and Toronto signed the covenant that brings our two dioceses into a companion relationship. Since the signing of our agreement, a small representative group from each diocese has been meeting monthly – in both Portuguese and English – to pray together and to plan events. For example, clergy from both dioceses will gather online for a joint study day on liberation theology on March 25. In the fall, a youth delegation from Brasilia will join our own youth at the Re-Charge youth retreat at Muskoka Woods camp. And we anticipate sending a delegation from Toronto to Brasilia in 2026. We have even developed a shared logo for our relationship that combines elements of each of our own logos: our Diocese of Toronto dove springing from their Ipe Tree. You can expect to hear more about this companion partnership as we enter into the second year of it.

Closer to home, the partnerships within our own Diocese continue to flourish. When we speak of casting the net, we are referring to the supportive, creative and collaborative ministry that occurs in each deanery and regionalization, between parishes and congregations, amongst church neighbours and colleagues. We are grateful to our

hardworking and devout clergy and our dedicated lay leaders, especially churchwardens, treasurers, administrators, musicians and the countless church staff and parish volunteers who are Christ's hands and feet of ministry in our communities. We are so grateful for all of your faithful work in our parishes and beyond.

We have embarked on a feasibility study to discern if this is the right time for the Diocese to conduct a major financial campaign. Over the next six months, M&M International, a Toronto-based fundraising firm, will listen to parishes large and small, soliciting feedback on a case for support. It is proposed that if a campaign does go forward, the majority of funds raised will remain in the parishes, with a smaller portion supporting the 20 Calls at the diocesan level. Your feedback and commitment will make the difference as we look into this additional way of working together.

Lastly, we want to encourage each Vestry meeting to consider this year's social justice motion: "Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario." The Church has a role to play in calling on government for responsible actions in caring for our most vulnerable neighbours, to ensure life-saving protections for those experiencing addictions and other challenges. Please consider how your parish can speak up, and out, for those who require advocacy. As we anticipate going to the polls in the coming year – federally and provincially – let us remember our baptismal promises as we cast our ballots, choosing candidates who align with our values. And let us pray for them.

For it is in praying that we are drawn ever deeper into relationship with the Triune God and become more attentive to the will of our Heavenly Creator. In this Season of Spiritual Renewal, we ask every reader of this letter to commit more deeply to a life of prayer, that it may infuse your every day with Grace as you witness to the Love of Christ in your life and to the world.

In your prayers, please pray for all three of us, your College of Bishops, both in your personal daily devotions as well as your parish's weekly intercessions. Know that we are praying for you too, giving thanks for our common life together across our wonderful diocesan family.

Yours faithfully in Christ Jesus,



The Right Rev. Andrew J. Asbil
Bishop of Toronto



The Right Rev. Riscylla Shaw
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto



The Right Rev. Kevin Robertson
Suffragan Bishop of Toronto

Rector's Report

Submitted by the Rev. Philip Stonhouse

Hello to my St. Matthew's family,

"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is being reported all over the world" (*Romans 1:8*)

It is never dull at St. Matthews. As I write this between Christmas and the New Year, likely the calmest week in our church, I am looking forward to Camp Matt, Mentorship, Sermon Series', Special Guests (including our little girl), special group studies, and so much more. At St. Matthew's we always have an event or occasion that waits for us with open arms. This is a lovely manifestation of you, the people of St. Matthew's who are so welcoming, waiting with those same open arms.

I recently wrote a report to the government, and they asked, "What do you do at St. Matthews?" So, I had the chance to reflect on our purpose, "Sharing Jesus' Love." Here is what I wrote:

St. Matthew's vision is to be a church that "shares Jesus' love". We attempt to do this through:

Discipleship, as we grow to understand what Jesus' love is and how it shapes us.

- We have adult groups and special children and youth groups that grow together in fun and engaging ways - along with individual mentoring.

Worship, as we respond to Jesus' immense love, we can't help but give it back to him.

- We have a variety of welcoming forms of worship that offer something for everyone from our traditional service to our worship band to our family-friendly services.

Fellowship, as we love Jesus in our brothers and sisters in our church and others.

- We hold special events (like performances, games, and speakers) and regular gatherings (like our twice-weekly coffee times) for people to grow in friendship and love as Jesus' love becomes manifest in our midst.

Evangelism, as we speak the good news of Jesus' love to our friends, neighbours, and strangers.

- We hold special invitational events to help adults and children meet Jesus in comfortable and welcoming ways (like Messy Church, concerts, camps, etc.).

Outreach, as we pour out that love in action.

- We partner with other local churches in serving and caring for those in need (like

refugee support, food cupboards, pastoral care, phone calls, special seasonal gifts, prayers and more).

Much of this can and should be found in every church. We believe that the Holy Spirit has given us special charisms and gifts to specialize in the ministries of children and youth, worship, preaching, and discipleship.

I thought this was important to share, because even though I know I have heard and discussed this with many of you, not all of you have seen or heard all that we are and do. We are a lovely mosaic of activity and people. It is a blessing to be a part of this family.

I also wanted to share some highlights from my past year:

The Talents Auction: Not only did we raise \$5500, but we were also able to share and experience the amazing talents and gifts of the people of St. Matthew's. Thank you to all your generous hearts.

The Mentorship Program: There are six people enrolled in the mentorship program. Individually we have been meeting about once a month. It has been special to see these individuals recommit themselves to purposefully growing in faith.

Newcomers: It seems that a week doesn't go by where we don't see a newcomer. Thank you to all those who welcome people as they walk through the door and thank you to all of you who stay. The Holy Spirit is doing a lot of the work in leading people to Jesus, and we have the privilege to see it.

Camp Matt: With 29 kids, 12 youth, and 17 adults, there were a lot of amazing friendships and fun at our second Camp Matt. It was wonderful to see the kids explore our theme, *Growing Together in Christ*, through worship, games, crafts, film, music, and drama.

MAID Conversations: It might be strange for such a controversial topic and discussion to be a highlight, but I was honestly impressed at people's ability to put their feelings aside and explore what God wants from us in relationship to this hard topic. By the end, we found a kind of unity that is only possible through the Holy Spirit (even if we didn't agree on every little detail).

Here I have only listed a few of the newest things. There is so much more that others will mention that we are consistently doing and there is so much joy and wonder.

As we look forward to 2025, I believe we have established a lot of great practices and events. I am hoping that as we continue our visioning, we will begin to see what God is calling us to lean into and focus on. We don't need to do everything. God is calling us to be something specific in our community and we are already seeing the fruit of that. I am excited and praying for what God has waiting for us.

"To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen." (*Romans 16:27*)

In love your brother in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip Stonhouse". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Rev. Philip Stonhouse

Warden's Report

Submitted by Karen Lee, Sharon Shao, Richard Farrar, and Paul Lorimer

Our annual Vestry meeting is an opportunity to Review, Reflect and Respond.

St. Matthew's 76 years of ministry continued to be a fulfilling year with many opportunities to Share Jesus' Love. We welcomed many new folks and families. Attendance at all our services continues to grow, including our monthly Messy Church. We are so thankful for the inspiring and thoughtful worship leadership of Rev. Philip Stonhouse and Rev. Mervyn Mercer alongside the musical accompanists of Tyler Versluis, our music director. We were pleased to welcome Rev. James Liu and his family to our clergy team.

St. Matthew's various ministries continued to grow and flourish through 2024 including Club Matt, Camp Matt, Messy Church, and the Youth Group. Many thanks to the leaders and volunteers for their time and dedication in nurturing the spiritual lives of the children and youth.

We also want to thank the many volunteers for their time, talent, and contributions to our various ministries.

We are grateful for the leadership of Katie Ward and team for hosting a successful fund-raising event in June 2024 to support our Living Waters fund. In November 2024, our initial Talents Auction was held. This event showcased the tremendous pool of talent of the St. Matthew's community as well as raising funds to help offset our financial deficit. Thank You All!

We wish to thank Marguerite Locke and Stuart Watt for their support and assistance in overseeing our properties. As our properties continue to age, ongoing maintenance and attention is required.

St. Matthew's is committed to sharing our large facility with community service and support groups as part of our community outreach. The support groups include Alcoholics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, APSGO (a parent/teen support group) and Scouts. These groups pay rent of a minimal amount to facilitate the needs of their clients/members.

In 2024 we continued to rent our facilities to Swansea Dogs and Kingsley Private School as well as various "one off" companies for film shoot preparation, special family events, etc. Occasionally neighbors rent parking spaces in our church parking lot.

We are grateful to our staff for their dedication and work in their respective positions. Thank you for your ongoing support.

We also would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the parish for the financial support received in 2024 to address our financial requirements for ongoing maintenance of our buildings for planned/unplanned costs. The 2024 financial statements can be found attached to the 2024 Vestry report.

We thank the parish for allowing us the honour to serve God and the parish as Wardens this past year.

Protecting and Expanding Harm Reduction in Ontario

2025 Social Justice Vestry Motion

We, the parish of St. Matthew, Islington, in the Diocese of Toronto, urge the Province of Ontario to reverse the planned closure of safe consumption sites in Ontario, and to lift the ban on the creation of new sites, in order to expand life-saving harm reduction services to Ontarians.

Ontario is currently in the midst of a deadly overdose crisis, which claims an average of seven lives every day. Safe consumption sites, also called supervised consumption sites, (SCS) are on the front lines of this crisis, having reversed more than 21,000 overdoses in the province between March 2020 and January 2024. Each one of these is a life saved. The sites offer an indoor, supervised space for people who use drugs to do so safely, with clean equipment and boxes for the safe disposal of used needles. They also have healthcare workers and other staff on hand to reverse overdoses, address other health issues, and connect people to other supports, including treatment. No death has occurred within an overdose prevention site since they were opened.

In 2018, the province put in place a cap of 21 such sites in Ontario, but has only funded 17. A few other supervised consumption sites in the province have received federal approval but no provincial funding. Two of these, in northern Ontario, have closed due to a lack of funds, while one in Toronto has continued to operate through donations. Other communities, such as Barrie, Cobourg, Oshawa, and Orillia, remain without such sites, despite demonstrable need in those communities.

In August 2024 the provincial government announced a ban on supervised drug consumption sites within 200 metres of schools and childcare centres. On Nov. 18, 2024, the province introduced Bill 223, the “Safer Streets, Stronger Communities Act,” which, in addition to implementing this geographic ban, prohibits municipalities or any other organizations from starting up new sites. As a result, ten SCS are slated to close by March 31, 2025, five of which are in Toronto. Another Toronto SCS, the Moss Park site on Sherbourne St., will also close, as the location is subject to redevelopment and a move to a new location would count as a “new” site under the ban.

Concerns about safety near the sites reached a fever pitch after a mother of two was killed by a stray bullet not far from the South Riverdale site in July of 2023. This is indeed a tragedy. Yet the external review commissioned by the province in the wake of the shooting, while making recommendations concerning safety, security, and

community engagement, did not recommend the closure of the site, but noted “a clear need for the services” in that location and recommended that the site continue to receive provincial funding.

The province claims that crime rates are higher near supervised consumption sites, but has not provided statistics to back up this claim, despite repeated requests to do so. Rather, analysis of data from the Toronto Police Service indicates that incidents of most types of crime dropped in neighbourhoods with SCS, often to a greater degree than in neighbourhoods without sites, and for crime rates which did not drop, there was no significant difference in the change of crime rates between neighbourhoods which had opened sites and neighbourhoods without them.

It is also worth noting that supervised consumption sites are located where they are because these are areas that already see high levels of drug use. Closing the sites will not change that fact. Indeed, the sites’ closure would lead to more public drug use, in parks, alleyways, and coffee shop washrooms; more discarded needles and other drug paraphernalia in public spaces; more blood-borne disease from the sharing of needles; and more likelihood of people overdosing and dying in public. This does not equate to greater safety for anybody in the community, including the children the province ostensibly wishes to protect.

Moreover, by responding to overdoses quickly, safe consumption sites reduce the strain on first responders and emergency services, saving taxpayer dollars. Without these sites, demand for ambulances and emergency rooms will only increase, leading to longer wait times for anyone who needs emergency medical treatment.

Along with the announced closures, the province announced an investment of \$378 million to open “Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment” (HART) hubs. While investment in treatment is welcome, several aspects of the announcement are problematic. Firstly, the name unjustly conflates the issues of homelessness and drug addiction. Most people with a substance use disorder are housed; and even though the experience of homelessness can cause people to increase their substance use, many people experiencing homelessness do not have substance use disorders. Moreover, the amount to be invested in the HART hubs is insufficient to meet the need for either treatment beds or supportive housing across the province. Further, the proposed HART hubs would be barred not only from providing supervised consumption, but also from providing sterile injection equipment, a proven public health measure which has been in place for decades, which is known to be a crucial tool in preventing the spread of blood-

borne disease and infectious and bacterial complications. This flies in the face of medical best practice.

Supervised consumption sites take a harm reduction approach to drug use. Recognizing that some people use drugs, and may not be ready, willing, or able to stop doing so entirely, harm reduction focuses on meeting people where they are, without ignoring or condemning them. By offering a place of support that meets people where they are, and respects the inherent dignity of each human being, these sites not only keep people alive to get treatment, but offer a place of community and compassion. These sites should not be seen in opposition to addiction treatment, but as part of a continuum of care available across our province.

“Jesus met people on the margins where they were, with compassion and respect,” says Keren Elumir, an Anglican who works as a nurse at the Moss Park site. “Everyone we meet is made in the image of God and loved by God. Harm reduction is holy work.”

¹ Ontario Drug Policy Research Network, <https://odprn.ca/occ-opioid-and-suspect-drug-related-death-data/>

² <https://amho.ca/amho-news/addictions-and-mental-health-ontario-calls-for-community-driven-and-evidence-based-approach-to-expanding-addictions-care/> These figures are a lower estimate than that given by the Registered Nurses’ Association of Ontario

³ <https://www.orilliamatters.com/local-news/city-push-for-treatment-services-harm-reduction-marred-by-provincial-announcement-9391095>

⁴ <https://www.ontario.ca/files/2024-08/moh-consumption-treatment-service-review-unity-health-en-2024-08-19.pdf>

⁵ Centre on Drug Policy Evaluation. Supervised Consumption Services in Toronto: Evidence and Recommendations (Toronto, November 2024).

St. Matthew's Church Register for 2024

Deaths

Pearl Gill
February 24, 2024

Percy Jordan
February 27, 2024

Evelyn Fulton
May 2, 2024

Bertha Akiiki
April 12, 2024

Ronald Landry
May 4, 2024

Jean Campbell
June 10, 2024

Jeffrey Wright
June 20, 2024

Enid Kemp-Jackson
August 14, 2024

Bonnie McConnell
September 26, 2024

Operating Fund Budget

Submitted by Karen Lee

St. Matthew's Anglican Church

Comparative Income Statement (Operating Fund)

	December 2024	December 2023	December Budget 2024	Budget 2025
Envelope Total	183,374	179,435	183,000	188,000
Open	2,444	1,808	2,400	2,500
Initial	75	150	150	50
Total Room Use	92,421	85,893	88,461	95,000
Seasonal Total	17,610	26,420	19,000	20,000
Memorials	2,015	5,385	3,000	3,000
Matt's Media	600	200	400	600
Miscellaneous	667	822	-	700
Parish Events - Total	13,498	9,287	5,100	10,100
Messy Church/Youth	6,012	-	1,000	6,000
Chancel Guild	890	1,169	1,000	1,000
Jubilee Grants	-	-	-	-
CEWS	-	-	-	-
 Total Revenue	 319,605	 310,569	 303,511	 326,950
 Total Clergy	 70,429	 66,612	 69,851	 71,663
Total Staff	98,056	81,451	87,492	100,920
Rectory	12,417	12,156	12,337	12,894
Church	84,983	91,081	77,864	80,988
Office	12,667	14,540	12,095	12,850
Audit	4,203	4,242	3,000	4,500
Ministry	8,592	4,309	7,532	8,500
Parish Events	359	4,611	500	-
Flowers	1,454	1,925	2,500	1,950
Miscellaneous	779	505	700	700
Synod	41,810	36,364	41,810	49,560
 Total Expense	 335,748	 317,795	 315,681	 344,525
 Net Income	 (16,144)	 (7,226)	 (12,170)	 (17,575)

Administrative Reports

Envelopes Report

Submitted by Noel Martin and Sandra Watt

For the year 2025, we have assigned 23 numbered envelope sets to parishioners, and there are 47 Pre-Authorized Givings users. In addition, there are 40 or so who give via electronic transfer and another small group of members or occasional visitors who contribute sporadically throughout the year, but do not wish to use numbered envelopes. Your generous Initial offerings offset the cost of the envelopes.

For those using the pew envelopes, please clearly write your full name on the front, along with the amount.

We encourage all regular donors to sign up for envelopes, or even better, the PAG program. Use of either system greatly reduces both the time required to process each donation and the likelihood of introduced errors in correct assignment of the donation.

Annual tax receipts will be ready in February. Please remember to pick yours up in the narthex and look it over right away (please don't wait until you are doing your tax return). If it is not correct, please let us know as soon as possible so it can be corrected.

If you can deliver a friend's receipt also, that would be appreciated.

If you take advantage of the extra two months to make a 2024 donation which you wish to be included in 2024 total, be sure to note that on the offering. Otherwise, I will include it in the 2025 receipt.

Many thanks to Lisa for gathering the files needed to help keep the donations lists organized and complete, and to Anita for coordinating the PAG and e-transfer system.

Property Report

Submitted by Marguerite Locke and Stuart Watt

Managing a property the size and age of St. Matthew's Church is a significant exercise requiring time and money to maintain our property and the Rectory in good condition. Tom Travaglini, our sexton or custodian, and Grant Dunbar, our weekend verger, are frequently called upon to address problems that arise, and we appreciate their diligent

work and care for our building. However, sometimes we require professional expertise as well.

Diocesan regulations require licensed tradespeople to do any work involving climbing ladders inside or outside the property. Likewise, for insurance purposes we utilize electrical contractors and technicians to attend to faulty switches, sensors, elevator inspections, furnace inspections, and other maintenance work. All these professional services are expensive.

Once again, the past year resulted in many water problems for the church. These were caused by incredibly heavy rainfalls, particularly in July and August. Unfortunately, St. Matthews was flooded in the youth room and elevator pit which is in the southwest corner below the narthex.

Remedial steps were undertaken to identify exactly where the seepage and leakage were coming from and included:

- extraction of the water with a large wet vac over a period of several days with attendance by elevator contractor for safety and pit inspection
- removal of a section of drywall and disposal of the carpet and old under pad in youth room.
- eavestrough cleaning, then eavestrough guards being installed on both sides of the main roof of the church
- pruning of the trees on east and west side near the front entrance
- installation of two new downspouts on the west side and upgraded sealant applied at the plumbing stack on narthex roof
- removal and replacement of custom membrane on flat roof, installation of a new cap around wall and installation of new wall flashings on narthex roof to prevent leaks

We believe that these repairs have solved the problem as no new leaks have appeared. The youth room drywall has been repaired, repainted, new area rug purchased, and the room back in shape for use. Thankfully, the elevator pit has also been dry for several months and is operating properly.

The Rectory roof also developed leaks during the July storm and *Let It Rain* responded quickly to repair the areas of missing shingles and reseal flashings on the west side. The remedial steps to overcome the water leakage and damages for the Church and Rectory cost more than \$7000.

Other maintenance issues included trimming of a large black walnut tree above the playground which was a safety issue. Several ceiling tiles have been replaced in classrooms, and a portable air conditioning unit was installed for summertime in the lounge. A couple of screens were replaced.

Reports Submitted by Parish Ministries

Discipleship (Believing)

"...Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well." 2 Timothy 2:1-2

Discipleship (Believing)

Submitted by Rev. Philip Stonhouse

This past year we stepped away from many new ministries to dig deeper into what we were already doing well. Hopefully, through the visioning process, we will continue to focus on what God is calling and gifting us to do.

Below are some of the larger discipleship programs we worked on.

Gift Groups (Tuesday Morning, Tuesday Night, and a possible new group)

After working through a study on the Sermon on the Mount, our Tuesday morning group of women started to discuss our Sunday readings and sermon.

Thank you to Dawn who faithfully sends the reading and questions to help spur both the morning and evening conversations

Thank you to Dawn, Ann, Dorothy, and all those who support these two groups. I am excited to see the excitement behind both groups.

We are also potentially starting a once monthly group for longtime members and newcomers that would meet, possibly in our gym and kitchen over a meal. Please reach out to Dawn or me (Rev. Philip) if you are interested in any of these three groups.

Wednesday Tea after Eucharist

A cup of tea after the 10:30 a.m. BCP Eucharist has provided an opportunity for discussion of the challenges that have arisen for our faith and life. Please join when you can.

Lent Bible Studies and Taizé

In 2024 we brought a new format to our four-week Lenten Bible Study. The bible study now comes in the middle of a reflective Taizé service. We found that the peace and reflection of the Taizé service moved into the study, giving both space and the mindset to approach God's word prayerfully.

We also looked at the same passage all four weeks through the lens of the four rhythms of life. It was beautiful how the same passage could say something new and profound every week. We are looking forward to doing this again with a new passage in Lent 2025.

MAID Conversations

In a group that ranged between 20-35 people, we had a series of conversations about the reality of MAID. Our primary question was: What does God think about MAID? If it isn't clear, this is a discipleship question.

In our first conversation, it was evident that there were many perspectives. But by putting aside our experiences and focusing on slow and prayerful conversations over God's word, we came together to look at why people choose MAID, so that we might look at God's word for what he says. Three major reasons encapsulated most others: pain, taking control, and being a burden.

We took each of these reasons one by one and surveyed our knowledge of God's word without attempting to define what God is saying. Only then did we discuss what we heard in God's word.

We found both differences and commonalities throughout our first two discussions. Our third conversation took place about five months later to look at the questions people still had and to share some experiences. We agreed that having a large break before meeting again helped clarify some questions and ground us in what was discussed. We felt some clarity and resolution and ended with hope - the hope and power that the good news of Jesus Christ will overcome suffering and death.

Rhythms of Life

We held two retreats this year looking at Christian Rhythms of Life. Our Rhythms of Life were Worship, Discipleship, Evangelism, Fellowship, and Outreach (or stewardship). Each rhythm brings physical and spiritual realities that challenge us to live out our faith practically, which is important when we are new to faith, wanting to grow in faith, or

when our faith has become stagnant. Together, these five rhythms teach us that faith intersects with every moment of our lives.

Each of two retreats brought with it different exercises to help us explore each of these rhythms. A few examples of these exercises were Neighborhood Prayer Walk; Viseo Divina; Exploration of Worship music in different cultures; A time of reflection on "Be Still and Know I am God;" Make your own worship service; and so much more.

We hope that as a community we can dig into these rhythms more and weave them into our work and thinking.

Mentoring

In November we began a mentorship program with six mentees. These mentees were anyone who wanted to purposefully grow in their faith through one-on-one mentoring and community accountability.

Each mentee wrote a short application and brought with them two goals. The mentor used their application to give them a goal related to discipleship and prayer. Each month the mentees and the mentors decided on practical tasks to work on related to their physical goals.

The mentees are not alone in this work. Soon they will be meeting together to discuss their experience and do a study of "Practicing the Presence of God." There were also additional mentors to support them when a once-a-month meeting wasn't enough.

Advent Viewing of *The Chosen* and Bible Study

In November we continued our tradition of watching *The Chosen* together, then discussing it and a biblical passage. This year we were purposeful about starting every study with a bible reading, as we wanted to make sure first things were first things.

I know this viewing and discussion is a highlight for many people and that many rewatch in preparation for the discussion. Thank you to everyone for your dedication.

Thank you especially to Dawn and Michelle for helping to create the study and to Dave, Lauren, and Michelle for kicking us off with a discussion of Season 2 episode 1.

Camp Matt

Our second year of Camp Matt was a great experience for all involved.

We built on last year's successes, borrowing much of the same content, material, and structure, and adapting it to our new theme - Growing Together: A Mighty Branch in God's Vine.

We saw camp participation grow from 20 children in 2023 to 29 in 2024. We also grew our youth leadership from nine to 12. Adult leadership held steady at 17 volunteers.

In our structure, there are a large variety of ways and times that kids and youth explore the theme for the day and week. Whether a child learns best through music, videos, action, games, crafts, or even friendship there is something every day for them.

For the volunteers, outside of the directors, floats and youth, no one had to be there the whole day. For those who did stay, there were built-in times to step away and rest.

It was lovely to see the relationships and faith that were growing.

On Camp Matt Sunday, the church community experienced a taste of camp.

Youth, Children, and Family Ministry (Believing)

Youth

Submitted by Bryan Tran

2024 has been a year of engagement for our youth ministry, with our young people actively involved in a variety of events and programs that have deepened their faith and strengthened our community. I am grateful for the dedication of our youth, volunteers, and church leadership, whose support has been instrumental in sustaining our ministry. From our weekly gatherings to special initiatives, it has been inspiring to see our youth embrace new opportunities and grow in their faith in meaningful ways.

A significant new initiative this year was the Youth Alpha program, which we began in January. It was a 9-week, 13-session journey that provided an opportunity to explore our faith in an open and engaging way—while also sharing meals together. My wife, Tatiana, and I had the pleasure of hosting the youth in our home for dinner and a session to kick off the Alpha weekend experience. This was followed by a day retreat at the church, which coincided with the adult retreat, where we covered three additional sessions. A few weeks later, we welcomed the youth back into our home for breakfast and the final session. Some of the older youth also took on leadership roles by helping to facilitate

discussions. Overall, Youth Alpha created meaningful opportunities for conversation, reflection, and connection for everyone involved.

Another new initiative this year was our focus on a single, year-long theme for Sunday morning discussions, titled "Influencers in the Life of Jesus." Each session explored the lives of people around Jesus, considering their decisions and the influences shaping them. It has been fascinating to see how some of these influences from over 2,000 years ago still resonate with our lives today.

As usual, many of our youth attended the Winter Radiate Retreat at Ontario Pioneer Camp and the Fall Diocesan Retreat at Muskoka Woods. These retreats are always a great time to connect with each other and with God and enjoy the beauty of nature. Although I wasn't able to attend the Diocesan Retreat last year due to travel complications, I'm told the experience was enriching. Special thanks to Ian Physick from BYMC for stepping in and leading the youth during my absence.

Our youth have also taken on many leadership roles within the church. Notably, they served as leaders for our second annual summer camp, Camp Matt, where they guided campers through activities, helped manage conflict, and created a warm, welcoming environment. They also taught lessons in Club Matt (Sunday School), led activity stations at Messy Church, and contributed to worship as part of the worship team. During our first-ever Graduation Sunday service, several youths played key leadership roles, including preaching a sermon and delivering the prayers of the people.

Looking ahead, we hope to redesign and renovate our youth room, find more ways to engage with our local community, and explore opportunities for partnership with other local churches. A big thank you goes out to all of you who make our youth ministry possible. We are truly blessed to have such an engaged and committed group of young people who bring so much energy and life to our congregation. It is an honour to witness their journeys and support their spiritual development.

Club Matt

Submitted by the Club Matt team

Over the past year St. Matthew's has welcomed several new families and children. The age-appropriate children's program, Club Matt, is offered in the 9:30 service, on the 2nd - 4/5th Sundays of each month, and the Unity Service at 10:30 on the first Sunday of the month. The form of the service and the time appeal to different family needs; as a result, attendance varies. In Club Matt Junior (ages 3-6) 4-7 children eagerly learn together and

in Club Matt Senior (ages 7 -10) 6 – 11 very enthusiastic kids explore the lessons together.

We are in the third and final year of reshaping a Club Matt curriculum from established materials. They are being adapted for our children and the resources available to us. Dawn Mercer and Jenna Wukasch work with Reverend Philip to prepare suggested learning materials for each week with the goal of introducing children to the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Anglican worship practices. Teachers take the materials and provide a lesson suited for the children they work with. In the past year we explored:

- Jesus' Parables
- Communion/Eucharist
- The Early Church Prays
- The Prophets and Justice
- The Summer program was learning about God from Science.

We continue to offer both Christmas and Easter Pageants as active ways for children and youth to participate in the major events of Jesus' life. Pageants draw many folks including extended families and engage the broader St. Matthew's community. We are thankful for a long tradition of dramatic presentations in the extensive costume collection with which we have been blessed.

Our intent to engage children in active exploration of the Bible and their faith requires a team of committed leaders; some are active teachers, and some are at the organization level. We currently need to add a few new people to the team. If you are called to add your talents at teaching, organizing, or communications, we would love to talk to you about joining the team.

We are very thankful for the ongoing support of Clergy, Wardens, and Vestry for Club Matt activities.

Messy Church

Submitted by Linda Dickson

Messy Church had a busy 2024. We welcomed new children and new adult leaders. We also had a group of wonderful teens join us at each event to assist with activities and clean up. We could not do it without this amazing help.

We held eight Messy Church events last year. Below is a recap of our themes and activities.

January 2024 found us enjoying "God's Winter Wonderland." Although there was no snow, the evening included "snowball" fights in the gym, "snow" slime, and many large inflatable winter decorations.

The emphasis in February was on gratitude. We made a large heart with each person putting something they were grateful for on the heart to be used for Sunday worship. Children also made special gifts for others to say "Thank You" to them.

Our Easter theme in March recreated the Holy Week journey, with the children walking on a towel with sand on it, then washing each other's feet. We experienced the Last Supper in the lounge, then the Garden of Gethsemane, and finally arriving at the altar where Jesus asked them to wait for him when he went to pray.

In April we were "Dwelling in Mystery" with magic tricks and kaleidoscopes.

June had us look at being empowered. We learned how the Holy Spirit empowers us, and we made Shields of Faith, using its sections to describe what makes us feel strong.

Returning after the summer break, we celebrated "Every Child Matters" in September. Crafts included drum making and making family talking sticks.

October 's theme was "Our Cornucopia God." We made pinecone bird feeders to celebrate giving to all.

November started off "Journey to Christmas." We kicked off the Adventure passport which extended to Club Matt families and all the church families.

Thank you to all who volunteer, from taking pictures to staffing the signup table. Thank you to Rev. Philip who pulls each event together with a time of worship before we come together to enjoy a great meal made by Katie Ward.

A great big thank you to Dawn, Lisa, Isabella and Emily, who together plans the activities that put the Messy! into Messy Church.

We would love to have more St. Matthew's folks come to see how Messy Church works. If you find you have between 5:00 and 6:30 available, we would love to have you join us for worship and a meal and perhaps be part of the kitchen clean up. If you're interested, please speak to anyone on the team or call the office.

Fellowship & Worship (Belonging)

Music Ministry (Belonging)

Submitted by Tyler Versluis, Organist and Director of Music

The music ministry at St. Matthew's continues to grow and flourish, thanks to the support of our parishioners, staff, clergy, and wardens. We have a core group of singers "the Choir" who worship with us every Sunday at the 11:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Unity services, along with two worship teams with instrumentalists, who lead with the Choir at the 10:30 a.m. Unity service on the first Sunday of the month, and the 11:00 a.m. service the third Sunday of the month. In addition, the Choir and worship teams have worked hard to prepare music for our special services, including All Souls, Lessons and Carols, Christmas Eve services, Ash Wednesday and Holy Week. This growing team of committed musicians works weekly to bring an appropriate mix of hymns, chanted psalms, and praise songs to our Sunday worship. We continue to rehearse Thursday nights, and occasionally on Wednesdays.

Our Sunday afternoon concert series, "Music at St. Matthew's" continues to program an exciting mixture of musicians, ensembles, and composers. These concerts, specially curated by myself, are designed not only to bring artistic excellence into our church but to spiritually refresh us through the gift of music. Recent concerts have included the Polymuse String Quartet (November 17th), Henryk Górecki's *Lerchenmusik* (October 7th), and Duo Holz (May 26th). Our series this season is blessed by financial support by the family of Ron Landry, who deeply appreciated our music ministry.

In addition to these activities, I continue to lead music at Camp Matt and play for weddings and funerals.

Your encouragement for our ministry is appreciated, and we welcome everyone to join us, whether you sing, play an instrument, or choose to support us financially.

Chancel Guild (Belonging)

Submitted by Pat Currie and Sandra Wilson

2024 was a very challenging year! Due to unexpected circumstances our leader, Mary Gleason, had to step down. When I was approached to step into her position my first response was "sorry, not me." I have been part of the team for many years with two wonderful leaders in Bridget and Mary and I didn't feel I could fill this position. However, after much reflection, thought, and prayer, I could feel the calling, so I decided to accept the challenge.

We welcomed three new members in 2024. That brought our membership to nine; however, Richard Farrar stepped down at the end of the year. His contribution will certainly be missed.

Sandra is responsible for the flower arranging in the sanctuary and is more than willing to help anywhere else that she may be needed. The rest of us set up for communion, change the Church colours, and take care of the dusting and sanitizing in the sanctuary every weekend. I'm very grateful to have help from Dorothy Sproule in the washing of the Altar cloths, and Kathie Oakden and Vivien Knowles to take care of washing the Purificators on alternating months. I really appreciate this help. Many thanks to all of you.

Preparing for the Lenten Season was my first challenge, but with Sandra's help, I think all went well. All members of the Chancel Guild, and a few members from the congregation, learned to make Palm crosses. It was a fun-filled morning with lots of laughter and fellowship. After the clean-up, we assembled in the lounge for coffee and treats. We assisted Tyler in setting up and taking down the Stations of the Cross. Sandra took care of the ordering of the Easter lilies & beautifully decorated the church.

Thanksgiving was the next event, which Sandra orchestrated extremely well.

Advent involved lots of preparations:

- The Mitten tree was placed in the Narthex at the end of November and received 82 donations which were delivered to St. Paul's Anglican Church in Mississauga
- Preparation for Blue Christmas
- The church was fully decorated in time for the Pageant
- Christmas Eve services were fully staffed by the Chancel Guild
- All Christmas decorations were removed after January 5

Over the past year, we have organized the sanctuary. You may have noticed that the candles that were idle are now burning at three Sunday services.

The organ loft was a big task. However, we were able to improve the space by disposing of the outdated materials and generally just reorganizing everything, which created more shelf space.

The sacristy needed revamping. So, with Philip's guidance we have completed the upper cupboards. We hope to finish this task in 2025.

As challenging as the year has been, it has been extremely rewarding. I invite anyone who likes to serve to please join us in preparing the Lord's table. The commitment is

approximately two hours a month and very flexible. We are always looking to add and train new members so if anyone is interested or just curious as to what is involved, please contact Pat Currie.

Prayer Ministries (Belonging)

Submitted by Marilyn Friedmann

Intercessory Prayer/The Prayers of the People

This ministry was led by Mary Gleeson for many years and more recently by Barb Landry. As both Mary and Barb have had to step back from their leadership of this ministry, Marilyn Friedmann was asked to coordinate. We are deeply thankful to Mary for her deep commitment and enthusiastic leadership of this ministry and to Barb, who has been active in this ministry for many years.

In congregational worship, the liturgy is the work of all people of all ages, not just the priest.

The Prayers of the People are:

1. An expression of what we as a community may be thankful for, concerned or excited about.
2. Focused on the world and concerns for all of humanity.
3. Include concerns of both our local church and the wider church beyond St. Matthew's.
4. Intended to challenge people to continue to pray about these issues.
5. A response to the church season, Bible readings of the day and theme of the service.

An Intercessor acts as a conduit for the Holy Spirit to connect God's people with God. We don't try to change God's mind or try to say what should be done for people. God already knows about those for whom we pray but our prayers are an expression of our love and interest. In acting as an Intercessor in public worship the prayer leader is bringing before God the prayers of all the people gathered.

We are grateful for the dedication of Barb Landry, Nancy Hurn, Marguerite Locke, and Michelle Lorimer for leading Intercessory Prayer, and we are delighted to have welcomed Linda Harrison, Layla Ho, and Tatiana Saliba to the team in 2024. We would welcome more volunteers and encourage those interested to contact Rev. Philip. Training will be provided. It is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the scripture, deepen one's prayer practice and to get to know the needs of our community and to consider the needs of the wider world.

Lay Anointing (Belonging)

This ministry has been led by Bob Holloway for many years. As Bob has needed to step back from his volunteer work during the past year, Marilyn Friedmann was asked to coordinate this ministry, taking over from Bob. We are deeply thankful to Bob for his dedication and very capable leadership of this ministry for many years.

Lay Anointers are part of healing ministries within the Anglican church. This ministry is based on Jesus' concern and care for those in need. This is demonstrated in the Gospel of James in Chapter 5:14-15: "Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord."

James expects this rite to have three effects:

- The prayer of faith will save the sick
- The Lord will raise them up
- Their sins will be forgiven

This ministry of healing and anointing is an ancient custom.

Healing is not synonymous with curing. Rachel Held Evans, a Christian writer from Tennessee, in her book: "Searching for Sunday: Loving, Leaving and Finding the Church", wrote, "But there is a difference between curing and healing, and I believe the church is called to the slow and difficult work of healing. We are called to enter one another's pain, anoint it as hold, and stick around no matter the outcome." ("Searching for Sunday" quotes by Rachel Held Evans - Goodreads")

Any of us who pray and anoint are simply broken vessels who anoint in the love of Christ, as members together in this community of faith.

The Diocese of Toronto advises that "Anointing with oil is a healing ministry intended to happen within the life and worship of a parish or faith community. ("Lay Anointers - The Diocese of Toronto") It's not a private or individual ministry, but a ministry of the whole Church."

Anyone is encouraged to come to the back of the church during Communion to receive Lay Anointing. We anoint and pray for God's healing grace for all who are suffering in mind, body or spirit. It is helpful to provide your first name to the lay anointer. You can share with the anointer what you are requesting anointing for, or you can keep this to yourself, whatever feels right to you. You can come for anointing prayer if you desire healing for yourself or someone else.

We are grateful for our lay anointing volunteers: Ann Sim, Nancy Hurn, Deborah Hurn, Dorothy Sproule, and James Liu. If you are interested in becoming part of this ministry, please contact Reverend Philip. We welcome new volunteers and training is available. It is a very special opportunity to support our community members in a very intimate and caring ministry.

Partners in Prayer (Belonging)

Partners in Prayer has been a parish ministry for a long time. We believe strongly in the power of prayer and the power of many people praying.

This ministry has been led by Bob Holloway for many years and Bob had to step down part way through 2024 due to health challenges. We extend our deepest thanks to Bob for his long service and commitment.

Currently, we are seeking a volunteer to take the lead on this ministry. We invite anyone who has a strong belief in the power of prayer and supporting others in prayer to join this team. We use email to communicate prayer requests using first names only, unless someone specifically wishes to share their full name. The list is also shared with the church office so that the names of those we are praying for can be included in the Prayers of the People during Worship services.

In the interim, if you are interested in joining or leading this ministry or wish to request prayer, please contact Lisa in the church office.

Lectors (Belonging)

Submitted by Bruce Gleeson

We are grateful for the dedicated volunteers whose expressive reading of scripture enhances our worship, and we appreciate the support of our technical team who make that participation possible whether in person or online. We were pleased to welcome Linda Harrison, James Liu and Makram Anastas to our group this year and to have Club Matt members Sophia Lorimer, Joy Wukasch, Henri Locke, Caleb Ho, and Theo Versluis join Lauren Kujlis and Josh Lorimer as readers. We greatly appreciate Lianne Thompson's help in coordinating their inclusion in the 9:30 a.m. and Unity Services.

If you are interested in participating in this important ministry, please contact Bruce Gleeson or the rector and we will gladly include you in the reading schedule.

Hospitality (Belonging)

Submitted by Karen Lee

During 2024, St. Matthews has been able to extend hospitality to many, not only our church family but visiting guests, due to our amazing volunteers. Hospitality gatherings included weekly Coffee Hours, the Christmas Lunch, Pancake Supper, Fund Raising Dinner, Concert Receptions, and Funeral Teas as well as special worship services.

Hospitality is also extended through small group gatherings at private homes.

Many thanks go to the St. Matthews community for participating and contributing in so many ways to St. Matthew's Hospitality activities.

Matt's Media (Belonging)

Submitted by Kathie Oakden

Matt's Media is the parish newsletter of St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Islington. In 2024 our customary four issues were published: Lent/Easter (February 11), Pentecost (May 26), Thanksgiving (October 13) and Advent/Christmas (December 1).

Matt's Media's purpose is to inform parishioners (by reports and photographs) about recent Parish activities and to publicize future Worship Services and Events. Parishioners are invited to write a report about or take photographs at activities they attend. Please submit your articles and photos for inclusion in future issues of *Matt's Media*.

Electronic copies (PDF file) were distributed by email to all parishioners whose email address is on file at the church office. (If you are not receiving it, please inform the church office.) Paper copies (a full-colour booklet, 8.5x11") are available in the Narthex. Paper copies are mailed or delivered to parishioners who are supported by *FRIENDS for Friends*. If need be, you can request a paper copy by phoning the office. For past issues, electronic copies or reprints might be available.

Linda Harrison has joined the crew producing *Matt's Media*. Linda's energy and enthusiasm have provided new ideas and encouraged many people to write articles for inclusion. Linda and her husband, Bruce, have a long history in the parish, growing up and raising their two children here. Their son, Jonathan, now operates the family business (B. Harrison Services which advertises in *Matt's Media* their lawn irrigation and outdoor lighting services). Linda is the daughter of Ann Sim and the niece-in-law of Doreen Gallagher. Thank you, Linda.

St. Matthew's parishioners continue to appreciate the creativity, dedication, and skills of Lisa Tait, our Parish Administrator, who typesets and produces *Matt's Media* using Microsoft Publisher. Thank you, Lisa.

Sides People (Belonging)

Submitted by Rev. Philip Stonhouse

The sides people greet the people as they arrive and ensure any newcomers are warmly welcomed and any of their enquires answered. They count and record the number of people in attendance, including those online. The offertory plate is presented at the Doxology.

There are currently only four parishioners involved in this ministry. If you have interest in joining this team, please speak to the sides person on duty, Rev. Philip, or the office. Thank you to the sides people for their faithful and continued service to this ministry.

A big thank you to Ron Landry who led this ministry for so long and was so patient and purposeful as it relaunched after COVID. Thank you also to Cliff LaRose who has helped to support this ministry after Ron's death.

Stewardship (Belonging)

Submitted by Karen Lee

As you are aware, St. Matthew's has many ministries for which we are truly fortunate. We are grateful for our clergy and the many volunteers who give generously of their time and talents to ensure that these ministries thrive. Sincere thanks to all who contribute to the ministries which play a significant role in the life of the parish and Sharing Jesus' Love!

In March 2024, the annual Stewardship package was distributed to the members of the Parish. Parishioners' participation in the Preauthorized Remittance program, (also known as PAG), continues to assist greatly in helping with the management of our cash flow and keeping our accounts current.

Tech Team (Belonging)

Submitted by Karen Lee

St. Matthew's continues to be very fortunate to have a dedicated tech team that ensures that our worship services and other events are accessible online. The services are available through Zoom, YouTube and other platforms. We are grateful for the expertise of our head coach, Rev. Philip, and team members Noel Martin, Godwin Njeteneh, Emily

Crump, and the Lorimer Family. We thank the team for their dedication which makes it possible for St. Matthew's to Share Jesus' Love beyond the brick walls of the church.

Outreach (Behaving)

Food Cupboard (Behaving)

Submitted by Noel Martin

Our food cupboard is still operating in a very limited way. We currently have only two clients asking for food, they come regularly, and we need to be able to help them.

We continue to help St. James United Church on Burnhamthorpe Rd., for their large "Food Basket" operation, if ever there is a surplus that will not be used up before its Best Before Date.

We will continue to need and to collect your donations and put them to the best use.

We trust that you will continue to help provide for the seemingly increasing number who are struggling with food insecurity in our area. Your generous donations, of any amount, whether food or cash, are appreciated.

FRIENDS for Friends (Formerly Welcome Committee) (Behaving)

Submitted by Deborah Hurn

I would like to start by thanking those who have participated in this Ministry through deeds or prayers: Ann Sim, Karen Lee, Patricia Currie, Sharon Shao, Kathie Oakden, Mary Gleeson, Rev. Philip Stonhouse, Lianne Thompson, Dawn Mercer, Barb Landry, Katie Ward, Lisa Tait.

FRIENDS (Friends Relate In Every Need As Disciples for the Saviour) is reflective of the Ministry of this group. We try to be Welcoming; we try to be caring in all the work being done. Our Ministry is to be a friend to anyone who may be in need.

Our new activity this year is to make a conscious effort to support those who are bereaved. They have experienced a great amount of support at the time of a loved one's death but as time passes the support subsides. We want them to know that our thoughts and prayers last longer than the week.

This group has continued to provide support to many Parishioners via the phone, Home Communion, meal drop off, and home visits. We staff the Welcome Table as everyone comes into church during most of the services. It is our goal to greet newcomers and regular parishioners to keep them up to date on Parish activities. We have found it a

great way for newcomers to come in anonymously or to find out who we are and how is it exactly we "Share Jesus' Love."

We all have been drawn to St. Matthew's at various times. We all need some level of support at each of our life stages, sickness, loss of a family member, bereavement, new family member, or any life altering moments. Together, whether a team member or not, we all care for each other as we are called to do.

Social Media Report (Behaving)

Submitted by Tyler Versluis

St. Matthew's continues to operate three presences on the internet: a website, a Facebook page, and an Instagram account. The website, operated mainly by our Parish Administrator Lisa Tait, is constantly updated with events and information.

On average, the Facebook page is visited about 250 times per month and has 631 followers. Our Instagram has 129 followers and is visited about 90 times per month. Regular updates on these accounts show that our church ministries are alive and busy and encourage people to join us. Our website and social media accounts are often the first impression people will receive of St. Matthew's, and people will reach out to us on these platforms to connect or ask for prayers.

Our website and social media accounts are great ways to receive the "big picture" of what's happening at St. Matthew's. We encourage parishioners to stay updated with us on these platforms.

Website: saintmatts.ca

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/StMatthewsAnglicanChurch>

Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/st.matthewsislington>

Nominations

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, *"The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the Harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."* Matthew 9:37-38

Below please find the list of names for those in the parish who have so generously committed to share their gifts over the coming year.

Parish-elected Nominees:

People's Warden:	Karen Lee
Deputy People's Warden:	Nancy Hurn
Lay Delegates to Synod:	Helen Prankie, Bryan Tran
Alternate Lay Delegate to Synod:	Deborah Hurn
Stewardship:	Marguerite Locke
Envelope Secretary:	Noel Martin
Assistant Envelope Secretary:	Sandra Watt
Nominating Committee Chair:	Marguerite Locke
Scrutineers / Parish Tribunal:	Linda Dickson, Cliff LaRose

Rector's Appointments

Rector's Warden:	Sharon Shao
Deputy Rector's Warden:	Paul Lorimer
Property Chairs:	Stuart Watt/Marguerite Locke
Friends for Friends (Welcome Team):	Deborah Hurn
Prayer Ministry:	Open
Intercessors:	Marilyn Friedmann
Chancel:	Pat Currie
Readers:	Bruce Gleeson
Club Matt:	Deborah Hurn
Messy Church:	Linda Dickson
Parish Council Chair:	Open

St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Islington

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Service Times

Sunday 9:30 a.m. "All Ages"

Sunday 11:00 a.m. Book of Alternative Services

(Book of Common Prayer once a month)

Unity Worship 10:30 a.m. (first Sunday of each month)

Wednesday 10:30 a.m. Book of Common Prayer

Messy Church 4:00 p.m. last Saturday of the month

